

## Committee for Citizen Involvement/ Springfield Planning Commission

Minutes for Tuesday April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Meeting held on-line via Zoom

### Committee for Citizen Involvement Meeting

Planning Commissioners Present: Chair Andy Landen, Vice-Chair Matt Salazar, Grace Bergen, Michael Koivula, Kuri Gill, Sophie McGinley, and Andrew Buck

Absent – None

City Staff: Sandy Belson, Interim Planning Manager; Monica Sather, Senior Planner; Molly Markarian, Senior Planner; April Miller, Communications Coordinator; Shannon Morris, Planning Commission Assistant; Kristina Kraaz, Assistant City Attorney

Willamalane Staff: Kristina Boe, Landscape Architect; Eric Adams, Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Chair Landen called the meeting of the Committee for Citizen Involvement to order at 6:00 pm.

### Community Engagement Plan (CEP): Willamalane Comprehensive Plan

Senior Planner Monica Sather introduced this agenda item seeking the committee's feedback for Willamalane's Community Engagement Plan (CEP) for update of its Comprehensive Plan. Willamalane's Comprehensive Plan is one chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan in compliance with Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 8.

Kristina Boe, Landscape Architect for Willamalane, presented (see attached presentation).

Key comments and take-aways:

- Willamalane's community engagement should include outreach strategies such as public services announcements and radio spots. Short audio / video presentations in Spanish should also be created to engage the Latinx and Spanish speaking community members.
- Targeted community outreach should include NGOs, diverse populations, low-income groups, communities of faith, organizations such as Springfield Rotary, Arc of Lane County, Food for Lane County, NAACP, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Chifin Native Youth Center, Lane County tourism, hotels, and other service providers, and Boarder Boys Bike Club.
- Outreach should also consider users of Splash! at Lively Park who live outside Willamalane's service district. These users would benefit from seeing informational signs at the facility. QR codes could be included in the signage with more detail about the Plan.
- Springfield Public Library should be included in outreach strategies.

Motion: Commissioner Salazar moved to adopt the Community Engagement Plan in the agenda packet provided as attachment 1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McGinley. All Commissioners voted in favor. Motion carried.

In response to Commissioner Landen's request, Sandy Belson gave a brief tutorial on how the Commissioners log in and read comments in the SpringfieldOregonSpeaks website.

Commissioner Salazar reminded the Commissioners to click on the “read” button so the public can see that their comments have been viewed.

Assistant Attorney Kristina Kraaz confirmed that logging into the SpringfieldOregonSpeaks Website from a personal computer does not raise the same legal issues of emailing/ storing public records on private devices.

Commission Landen adjourned meeting of the Committee for Citizen Involvement at 6:52pm.

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## **Planning Commission Meeting**

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Andy Landen, Vice-Chair Matt Salazar, Grace Bergen, Michael Koivula, Kuri Gill, Sophie McGinley, and Andrew Buck

Absent – None

Staff: Sandy Belson, Interim Planning Manager; Monica Sather, Senior Planner; Molly Markarian, Senior Planner; April Miller, Communications Coordinator; Brian Barnett, Traffic Engineer; Michael Liebler, Transportation Planning Engineer; Emma Newman, Senior Transportation Planner; Loralyn Spiro, DPW Lead Communication’s Coordinator; Shannon Morris, Planning Commission Assistant

Kristina Kraaz, Assistant City Attorney

Chair Landen called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

### **Business From the Audience**

Joni Mogstad / temporarily on 51<sup>st</sup> Street explained that she called the Springfield Police Department (SPD) because she was unable to access the road where she lives. The street was blocked by parents picking up their children from school. The congestion on the street leads to long wait times, which can result in a public safety issue. The SPD informed her that this was not their responsibility and she needed to find a way around the blockage herself. Question: If law enforcement is not responsible for unblocking traffic in this instance, can the Planning Commission clarify who is responsible?

Commissioner Koivula suggested that she contact the Springfield School District. Another good venue to address her concerns is the SPAC (Springfield Police Advisory Committee).

### **Main Street Facility Plan**

Commissioner Landen: A public hearing was held on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The item was left open for public comment until February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Any comment provided after that date will be submitted to the City Council for their public hearing planned for May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tonight’s deliberations are to decide to approve, approve with modifications, or not approve the Main Street Facility Plan.

Conflict of Interest Roll Call: All Commissioners declared that they do not have any potential conflicts of interest.

### **Staff report Draft Facility Plan:**

Molly Markarian presented on the Main Street Draft Facility Plan (see attached presentation).

Commissioner Salazar asked to review the second to last slide of the presentation listing the proposed modifications saying it would be helpful to expand the language of the fourth bullet point concerning the right of acquisition and what that process would look like. This has been a hot topic in public comment.

The Commission deliberated on the Draft Facility Plan noting the following points:

- The 20-year + project will cost 130 million dollars not including inflation.
- The infrastructure modifications suggested in the draft Facility Plan directly address the safety concerns for the Main Street corridor. The plan would cut the number of fatalities by half, reduce severe injury, and result in less costly property damage.
- An [Addendum](#) to Technical Memorandum #6 was just posted to the City's website, specifically Table 1. The speed limit was lowered from 40 mph to 35 mph in 2016. The below table provides a comparison of crash frequency and severity before and after the change in speed limit.

**All crashes:**

<b>2012</b> – 148	<b>2016</b> – 135
<b>2013</b> – 130	<b>2017</b> – 110
<b>2014</b> – 115	<b>2018</b> – 95
<b>2015</b> – 120	<b>2019</b> – 105

There is a downward trend of crashes during that time period.

**Injuries and Fatalities:**

<b>2012</b> – 78	<b>2016</b> – 83
<b>2013</b> – 67	<b>2017</b> – 67
<b>2014</b> – 55	<b>2018</b> – 68
<b>2015</b> – 71	<b>2019</b> – 67

No trend has been established. There appears to be more fluctuation between 2012 – 2016 than 2017 – 2019, which appears to be relatively static.

Staff provided the following points in responses to questions from the Commission:

- The grant with the best return with respect to safety is the All Roads Transportation (ARTS) grant. The State targets roadways with the highest crash numbers. This is a jurisdictionally blind grant with regard to which governmental agency applied. The cost / benefit ratio is the deciding factor in approving the grant. Once approved, the public outreach phase begins, including conversations with the property and business owners affected. If there is a Main Street Facility Plan in place and adopted, that would provide the guidance as to how the engineers would design the construction infrastructure improvements.
- This project will eventually include the e-NEPA – environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, which includes outreach and impacts. The best way to include specific information would be to adopt a toolbox of solutions reflecting public comment to the Facility Plan.

- Design of roundabouts will accommodate the longest truck for Rosboro Lumber and other trucking companies. It is possible to design a round-about that will service all different kind of trucks.
- With the limited funds likely to be available for this project, it is planned to keep the current curb width and sidewalk locations as they are for the foreseeable future. As of now, there will be no right of way purchases in the early stages of the plan. When that transitions, depends on when the funding is allocated to enter the next phase of the project.
- The key safety enhancements can be implemented inside the existing curb.
- If right of way is needed, it would be purchased through an independent land appraisal process.
- If businesses lose parking spaces, there could be efforts from the City to assist in redesigning parking lots to create additional parking spaces. Business or property owners would be compensated for any loss of parking spaces.

Kristina Kraaz explained that the appraisal process in cases of eminent domain can sometimes involve the court to weigh in, but often the process involves using ODOT's clearly outlined process to arrive at a fair compensation. This process is not always one involving the judicial system. If a business needs to be relocated, there is a State and Federal law called the Uniform Relocation Act that requires certain formulas for relocation.

Commissioner Koivula referenced his position paper expressing his concerns and standing on the Facility Plan and made the following comments:

The project would cost \$130 million in today's dollars without factoring in inflation and that "binding and mandatory" language in the proposal would lock in the current design ideas, even if there were significant changes in transportation, the economy, or other factors.

Any significant bike, pedestrian or transit improvements in the design were envisioned for the very last phases of the project, which would leave the "high stress" bicycle and pedestrian environments as is for a long time and transit stops would continue to impede traffic.

He expressed concerns that roundabouts facilitate a continuous flow of traffic (removing gaps in traffic that allow for turns) and in some cases (Exhibit A1 on p. 73) could increase chances of collisions. That initial implementation leaves curb line in place, leaving bike lanes narrow. He's most concerned with the binding nature of the plan given potential for changes in economics and transportation over the next 20 years.

In response, Kristina explained that having an adopted Facility Plan addresses public concerns by requiring that ODOT's design/construction would follow the adopted policies and use the solutions in the Facility Plan toolbox.

Commissioners expressed the following concerns:

- The pedestrian beacons that have been placed in the last decade are not being used.
- Raised medians may not address the safety issue since they could encourage jay-walking
- Is there a way to reduce the size of the median without impacting safety outcomes?
- The safety of the roundabouts.
- Competing factors: safety, traffic flow, and impact on businesses & community

Staff addressed the concerns of the Commissioners:

- The continuous flow of traffic provided by the roundabouts is very efficient.

- There is a reduction in delay compared to a traffic signal.
- The Mill Street intersection to Franklin Blvd roundabouts is 1,500 feet. They are no driveways creating friction works, so the road essentially acts like a cattle shoot that enables vehicles to move unimpeded.
- The roundabouts and medians would cut the crash experiences by half.
- A narrower median has been considered where it would fit, but that is highly dependent on how many breaks are in the median and if there are turn lanes. Reducing the width of the median would come at the cost of limiting the amount of breaks.
- The crash rate on roundabouts is similar to a traffic signal, but the crash type is different leading to less severe outcomes, far fewer fatalities, and fewer injuries with some property damage.

Several Commissioners reinforced the need to save lives and reduce injuries. Others expressed a desire to look further for solutions.

Commissioner Buck suggested moving pedestrian crossings further away from roundabouts and creating more separations for pedestrians and cyclists in high traffic transition/conflict areas.

Motion: Commissioner Salazar moved to adopt the order and recommendation as in the Agenda Packet as attachment 2 with the following changes recommended by the City Attorney to include the exhibits D and E in the motion. Commissioner McGinley seconded. Landen, Salazar, Gill & McGinley in favor – Koivula, Bergen and Buck opposed. Motion carries 4-3.

#### **City Council Reports from the Commissioners**

Commissioner Gill: The City Council met on March 15<sup>th</sup> for a work session. The topic was a partnership grant for publicly shared bicycles. City Council requested additional information:

- To check in with the business community on their support for this proposal;
- More data about the impact resulting from where these bicycles would be sited and;
- How the access and use of the bicycles would work considering the long narrow shape of the city.

#### **Business from the Planning Commission**

Commissioner McGinley: The Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) conducted a public hearing on March 30<sup>th</sup> for the climate friendly and equitable communities' rule-making process. There is a question-and-answer session held by the Land Conservation and Development Commission on Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup> from 2PM to 3PM.

#### **Business from the Development and Public Works Department**

Return to City Hall for Hybrid Meetings: Sandy Belson said it is targeted to have the next Commission meeting take place in a hybrid format on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The Commissioners can choose ad hoc whether they attend the meeting in person or virtually.

The Commissioners expressed some concern about the camera angles of the in-person participants. Staff will address this issue.

Next Meeting: April 17<sup>th</sup> at 6PM in the Council Chambers and via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned 9:01 pm.